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Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 09189 201212Z

15
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 AID-05 OMB-01 NIC-01 SAJ-01

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R 201112Z DEC 74
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1869
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, EAID, LA
SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN'S REPORT ON DECEMBER 18 CABINET MEETING

1. PGNU SPOKESMAN OUDAY SOUVANNAVONG BRIEFED PRESS DECEMBER 19 ON PREVIOUS DAY'S CABINET MEETING, WHICH TOOK PLACE IN VIENTIANE UNDER JOINT CHAIRMANSHIP OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PHOUMI VONGVICHIT AND LEUAM INSISIENGMAY. OUDAY SAID NEXT MEETING WOULD BE DECEMBER 23 AT LUANG PRABANG.

2. ACCORDING TO OUDAY, CABINET DESIGNATED INTERIOR MINISTER PHENG PHONGSAVAN TO HEAD LAO DELEGATION TO MEETING OF LAO-THAI JOINT COMMISSION IN BANGKOK IN EARLY JANUARY. LAO EXPECT TO RAISE ECONOMIC ISSUES AND TRANSIT RIGHTS.

3. THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMY WAS DESIGNATED TO ESTABLISH A COM-MITTEE TO HANDLE RECEIPT OF ASSISTANCE FROM NORTH VIET-NAM.

4. CABINET DECIDED THAT THOSE BUSINESSMEN WHO HAD ALREADY PAID THE NECESSARY TAXES AND FEES WOULD BE AUTHORIZED TO EXPORT
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 VIENTI 09189 201212Z

TIMBER UP TO LIMIT OF THEIR PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED QUOTAS AS AN

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

EXCEPTION TO RECENT ORDER FORBIDDING TIMBER EXPORTS IN GENERAL.

5. MINISTRY OF ECONOMY REPORTED THAT A BUSINESSMAN (UNNAMED) HAD ILLEGALLY SOLD SEVEN HUNDRED CASES OF CONDENSED MILK. CABINET DECIDED HE BE FINED AMOUNT OF HIS ORIGINAL INVESTMENT AND PROFIT AND HAVE HIS LICENSE TO ENGAGE IN BUSINESS SUSPENDED FOR A YEAR.

6. IN RESPONSE TO RECENT ATTACKS ON TOURISTS, CABINET DIRECTED MIXED POLICE OF VIENTIANE TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE PROTECTION IN AREAS FREQUENTED BY TOURISTS.

7. IN REPLY TO A QUESTION, OUDAY SAID SOVIET UNION HAD NOT RESPONDED TO LAO QUERIES REGARDING AID. HE EXPECTED, HOWEVER, THAT SOVIETS WOULD MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT AFTER SOTH PHETRASY'S "GOOD WILL MISSION" HAD VISITED MOSCOW.

8. OUDAY WAS ASKED ABOUT RECENT CRITICISM OF THREE OFFICIALS IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION FOR ALLEGEDLY CUTTING OFF RADIO BROADCAST OF OPENING CEREMONY OF SECOND SESSION OF JOINT NATIONAL POLITICAL COUNCIL. HE REPLIED THAT SUCH CRITICISM WAS IN-APPROPRIATE SINCE HE HIMSELF AS SECSTATE FOR INFORMATION HAD ORDERED BROADCAST ENDED. OUDAY SAID HE GAVE ORDER BECAUSE HE AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION SOUK VONGSAK HAD AGREED SOME TIME AGO NOT TO ALLOW PERSONAL ATTACKS IN GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED RADIO AND PRESS. CABINET HAD ENDORSED THIS AGREEMENT. THEREFORE, WHEN OFFICIAL PROGRAM CONCLUDED WITH PRINCE SOUPHANOUVONG'S SPEECH HE ENDED BROADCAST BEFORE STATEMENTS BY TWO STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES.

9. REPORTER ASKED ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION OF CABINET'S RECENT REQUEST THAT RADIOS AND NEWSPAPERS OF THE TWO SIDES END THEIR EXCHANGES OF PUBLIC ATTACKS. OUDAY REPLIED THAT SUCH ATTACKS HAD DECLINED IN NUMBER BUT THAT PHOUMI VONGVICHIT HAD COMPLAINED AT CABINET MEETING THAT MR-I AND MR-V RADIOS STILL BROADCAST ATTACKS ON PATRIOTIC FORCES.
WHITEHOUSE

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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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